



Contact: John Zeanah  
Phone: 901-576-7167  
Email: john.zeanah@memphistn.gov

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## **THE MID-SOUTH REGIONAL GREENPRINT COMPLETES VISIONING PROCESS**

*Regional stakeholders develop a vision for connected green space and sustainability*

The Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan completed the first major milestone of the three-year planning project in late October with the development of the regional Vision Plan.

In November 2011, Shelby County Government was awarded the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant in the amount of \$2,619,999 for the Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan. The study area for the Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan covers Shelby County and portions of Fayette County TN, Crittenden County AR, and DeSoto County MS.

The plan is designed to enhance regional livability and sustainability by establishing a unified vision for a region-wide network of greenspace areas, or Greenprint, which serves to address access to parks and open space, resource conservation, environmental protection, community health, housing, transportation alternatives, economic development, and social equity in the Greater Memphis Area. Planning for the Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan is coordinated by the Memphis and Shelby County Office of Sustainability.

The Vision Plan was developed by a consortium of over 200 stakeholders representing over 80 organizations from the four-county area, the Office of Sustainability, and a consultant team led by LRK, Inc. The planning consortium includes membership from non-profit organizations, local and state governments, educational institutions, community groups, private businesses, and individual citizens. The visioning process also involved 38 community meetings and discussions with close to 1,000 residents of the region.

The Regional Vision Plan can be found online at <http://www.midsouthgreenprint.org/vision>.

The Mid-South Regional Greenprint and Sustainability Plan is expected to be completed in December 2014 and will include recommendations from the Regional Vision Plan in addition to:

- Detailed recommendations for a broader network of alternative transportation options;

- Detailed recommendations for better connecting employees to major employers and employment centers in the region;
- A Health Impact Assessment of plan recommendations to improve the impact of the vision on regional health;
- Recommendations for how to improve housing choices with an emphasis on fair housing and regional equity; and
- Best practices for integrating equity in planning.

The next phase of the initiative also involves advancing the vision plan by conducting localized or topic-focused planning activities led by many of the consortium partners. Twenty “subplanning” projects were selected in a competitive process to be conducted over the next year, ranging from plans for a multi-modal town center in Frayser to an eco-park plan for the Arkansas side of the Harahan Bridge. A complete list of subplanning projects can be found by visiting <http://www.midsouthgreenprint.org/subplanning>.

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